

# Take Control Now: How to Keep Your Home Clean With Pets

*A comprehensive guide to keeping your home fur-free and to protecting your belongings without all the backbreaking work that typically comes with caring for a home with pets.*



**PET SITTERS IRELAND**   
LOVE YOUR PETS!

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## Introduction

Let's face it. A home with pets is never going to be immaculate. Even if you follow your dog, cat, bird, or rabbit around the house with a vacuum cleaner, you're still going to miss those stray chunks of fur or feathers.

You're a pet parent. It's just your reality.

The good news is you don't have to throw your hands up in the air in exasperation, overwhelmed that you will never be able to keep your home clean while you have pets. You *can* transform your home into a pet-friendly sanctuary where both you and your pets will be comfortable and happy.

In the following pages, you will learn about the many ways you can keep your home clean – even if you've got a houseful of animals – and protected from your pet's shedding fur, long nails, and curious teeth.

## How to Choose Pet-Friendly Cleaning Supplies

Keeping a house clean with pets can be, at best, a challenge. Even with the tidiest pet, fur or feathers shed on furniture, floors, and clothes. Pets sometimes leave toys abandoned in the middle of the room or scattered throughout the house. Accidents, especially as pets grow older, happen on carpeted floors and spilled food can sometimes be commonplace.

A clean house, however, doesn't have to be a distant dream or an unattainable goal, especially if you choose pet-friendly cleaning supplies

Following are some tips on how to choose pet-friendly cleaning supplies:

### **Go the natural route.**

Sometimes the safest and the easiest way to keep your home clean is to opt for natural pet-friendly cleaning products. Two of the most popular and all natural cleaning products are vinegar and baking soda, each of which can help remove odors and stains from carpets and furniture.

### **Look for products labeled pet-friendly or pet safe.**

Many cleaning products carry labels, declaring if the product is pet-friendly or pet safe. Choose only those products that are pet-friendly. If you are still concerned, even with the pet safe label, either go the natural route or go online to learn more about the product at the manufacturer's website. You may also find helpful information from other pet parents if you do an internet search for "product name + review."

### **Read product ingredients.**

Don't just assume that a product is safe for use around pets. To ensure your pet's safety, read the ingredients of any cleaning products you plan to purchase, especially if the product isn't labeled as pet safe or pet-friendly.

Common household chemicals that are **not** pet-friendly, include:

- Ammonia can be particularly hazardous to birds and small animals.
- Bleach can pose a danger to all animals and may result in anemia, cancer, and even liver damage in pets.
- Formaldehyde, which may be found in household cleaning products and even pet shampoo, can cause cancer and affect those with asthma.



If you must absolutely use a non-pet friendly product to clean your floor, for example, make sure you keep your pet out of the room until you have cleaned the floor and it is dry. In addition, whether you have birds in a cage or who are free fly, do not allow them in the any rooms in which you are cleaning (nor should you allow them in or near the kitchen when you are cooking).

## How Regular Grooming Will Make Cleaning Your Home Even Easier

Every year – multiple times – your home probably turns into a big ball of fur. Shedding season. As your beloved pet begins to shed his coat and grow his new coat, your furniture, clothing, carpets, and just about everything in the house begins to sprout his fur or hair.

Maintaining a clean home with pets can be challenging any time of the year. But, when your pet is shedding, that challenge can become impossible – *almost*.



### **Create a grooming schedule.**

Grooming is essential to your pet's overall health and wellbeing. Groom your pet according to his particular breed's needs, paying extra attention to grooming during periods of heavy shedding. If your pet doesn't like being brushed or needs a regular cut, you may want to consider using the services of a groomer. When you groom your pet regularly, you'll find less fur/hair around your home.

### **Bathe your dog regularly.**

A regular bath can help alleviate pet dander and allergens. In addition, a quick wipe down, when your dog comes in the house after playing in the mud, for example, can also help keep dirt and debris from cluttering your home.

But, even with regular grooming, fur and hair are inevitably going to find themselves on the floor, furniture, and clothing. Here are some tips to quickly and easily remove that pesky fur/hair:

- Throw a sheet or a blanket over furniture and/or chairs that attract fur and hair that your pets are allowed to snooze on, especially during the heavy shedding season.
- Use a roller/lint brush to quickly remove excess hair and fur from your clothing and even your furniture. Some pet experts also advise that using a fabric softener dryer sheet will do the trick as well.
- Vacuum your carpets regularly. If you have the proper vacuum attachments, you may also be able to vacuum your furniture with the same ease as using a roller or a lint brush. If you find yourself in a bind, a piece of duct tape can easily lift up fur and hair, too.
- A can of compressed air, which usually comes with a nozzle, can help you rid your computer keyboards and other small spaces of pesky pet hair and fur.

## Choose a Pet-Friendly Vacuum

Sometimes all that time spent cleaning – especially when you have kids or pets (or, if you dare to imagine, both kids *and* pets) – hardly seems worth it. The hours of backbreaking (okay, maybe exaggerating a bit) labor to pick up pet toys, wash and dry the food and water bowls, and vacuum the pet hair/fur from the floor in every room in the house can wear thin with even the most patient among us.

Then, after you prop your feet up on a chair and toast yourself for a job well done, you turn around to find...the same mess you could swear you just cleaned up.

Cleaning may be a never-ending cycle when you have pets, but you can make the job easier for yourself by choosing a pet-friendly vacuum. Here are some tips to help you choose a pet-friendly, effective vacuum:

### Consider the price.

Your first consideration is budget. How much can you afford to spend? You may not be able to pay or want to pay for a top of the line pet-friendly vacuum cleaner. And, you shouldn't have to break the bank. There are plenty of affordable, pet-friendly vacuums out there so be sure to decide how much you want to spend before you head to the store.



### Look for a HEPA filter.

A vacuum cleaner with a HEPA filter can make your life much easier – and your air much safer to breathe, especially if you have allergies or are bothered by pet dander. Try to find a vacuum cleaner that has a HEPA filter, which will help remove the pet dander from your carpets.

### Find a vacuum that has powerful suction.

Sometimes you have to clean up more than just pet hair or fur. You may have to vacuum up the extra food your bird throws on the floor, the hay your rabbit tossed out of his bowl, or spare pieces of cardboard that fell out of your hamster's cage. Look for a vacuum that has powerful suction that will grab up those tiny pieces of hay, food, and fur.

**Check out the nozzles.**

Unless you plan to use your vacuum strictly for vacuuming the carpet, you will likely need different size nozzles to allow you to clean your furniture, in small spaces such as under the couch, and in other hard-to-reach areas. Find a pet-friendly vacuum that has a variety of nozzles.

Before you bring your vacuum cleaner home, ask the sales associate if you can test it so you can see the power of the suction and to test the weight to determine if you will be comfortable moving it around your home.

## Regularly Wash Bedding

Think of how happy your dog – or cat or other pet – looks curled up on your bed or on her own bed. She's so cute that you barely notice the drool making a tiny puddle on the bedding and, maybe if she's elderly, the little puddles of urine that inadvertently drip out from time to time.

Add that to pet dander, crumbs from hidden treats, and anything else that might attach to your pet and your bedding and your pet's bedding requires a regular washing – for your health and hers.

### **Make it a habit to wash your pets' bedding.**

Create a regular schedule for washing your pets' bedding and any bedding, blankets, or pet bed covers your pet uses. In an ideal world, you will wash your pets' bedding every week to keep it clean and fresh. However, we don't live in an ideal world and most of us have extremely busy lives. A heavy wash every other week, therefore, should suffice if you can't do it every week. Of course, if your pet has an accident or the bedding becomes messy or smelly before your regular wash, wash it as soon as possible.

### **Use pet-friendly detergent.**

Some pets' skin – just like the skin of their human counterparts – can become irritated from perfumes used in detergent. Look for a laundry detergent that is pet friendly. A scent free laundry detergent eliminates the worry for skin allergies from perfumes. Also be sure to avoid using fabric softener unless it is labeled as scent free or fragrance free.

### **Choose the right water temperature.**

Today's washers typically come preset with temperatures – cold water and hot water, for example – and all you have to do is decide if you want to wash the bedding in cold or in hot water (choose hot). If your washer also allows you to choose the strength of the wash (gentle, heavy, etc.), opt for the heaviest cycle possible. A heavy wash in hot water will help clean the bedding of pet dander, bacteria, and other messes.



### **Dry thoroughly.**

Either line dry in the garden or put your pet bedding in the dryer. Make sure the bedding is completely dried before putting it back on your pet's bed or allowing her to use it.

Sometimes having pets is similar to having children: You have to adapt your home to their needs – and to protect your belongings, including the furniture, flooring, and even the paint on the walls. You can begin pet proofing with the very basics – such as flooring and paint

– especially if you are moving or are remodeling your home.

## How to Choose Pet Friendly Furnishings

Making your home pet-friendly doesn't have to be difficult. In fact, if you really want to make your life easier when it comes to cleaning, consider opting for pet friendly furnishings, including:

### Go for the sturdy flooring.

Hardwood floors may look absolutely stunning throughout your house but, if your pets are going to have access to the rooms with hardwood, be prepared for scratches and scuffing. If you must have hardwood floors, protect them by putting throw rugs on the areas most used by your pets. Carpet, too, can cause problems, especially if your pets like to dig or to chew.

Many pet owners have found that vinyl flooring is ideal for having pets. Vinyl flooring is typically easy to clean, is durable, and doesn't scratch as easily as hardwood floors.



### Find pet friendly, non-toxic paint.

Walls can quickly accumulate with pet dander and, if you're going to paint your walls while your pets and your family are staying at the house, the fumes can potentially cause both you and your pets to become sick.

One of your biggest concerns should be finding a pet friendly, non-toxic paint. To make it easier to clean the dog droll, the cat fur, and the other messes from the walls, you may want to consider a washable paint or a semi-gloss paint, which is easier to clean than typical paint.

### Choose durable furniture.

The type of furniture you choose may depend on your pets. Some people swear by the sturdiness of leather furniture, which often lasts longer than fabric furniture. However, if you have cats, your leather may be at risk.

Microfiber furniture has earned the reputation for being durable. Better still, cats often do not have the same inclination to claw at microfiber as they might with leather or fabric furniture. In addition, keeping microfiber furniture clean is simple by vacuuming or using a roller brush. You can also use a damp cloth on microfiber.

If you don't want to buy new furniture or it just doesn't fit into your budget right now, you can also purchase sofa, loveseat, and chair coverings for only a fraction of the cost of new furniture. These coverings can protect and keep your furniture in good shape.

## Five Tips for Getting Rid of Dog Hair

You have guests arriving in only minutes when you notice it – your sofa is filled with dog hair. Then you look down at your beautiful black shirt and little dog hairs decorate it in an intricate pattern.

People with dogs understand the challenge of living a dog hair free life. Fellow dog families understand – when they see the stray strands of dog hair on your jacket or stuck to your jeans – that it's even a sign of affection. Sure, you may have removed the dog hair with a roller brush before you left but your overeager pooch may just have jumped up to say goodbye as you were headed out of the door.

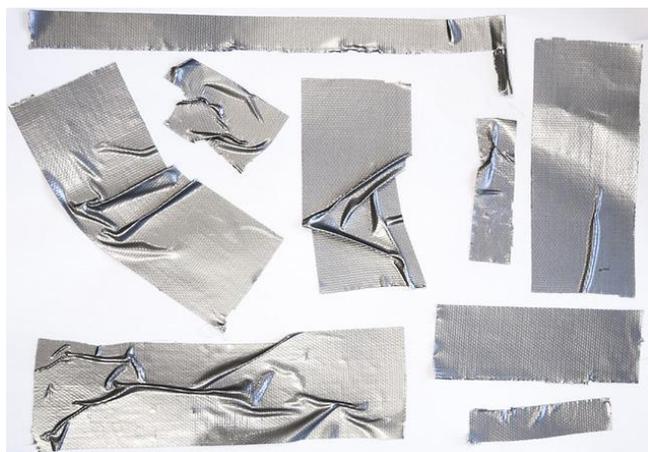
Getting rid of dog hair may be possible for a short time but dog hair will be a recurring issue you will have to deal with consistently during your dog's life.

### **Use a damp cloth.**

Find an old cloth and quickly rinse it under water so it is damp but not soaked. Take the damp cloth and run it over the area from where you want to remove the dog hair: the sofa, chairs, clothes, and so on. Other dog owners swear by using a damp mop to remove pet hair from hardwood floors or other non-carpeted areas.

### **Invest in plastic dishwashing gloves.**

Dishwashing gloves offer a fast and an easy way to clean pet hair. Put the gloves on your hands and start moving your hand back and forth along the surface from which you want to remove the pet hair. The hair will begin to grow into a ball that you can then just throw away.



### **Try duct tape.**

Duct tape – or any sturdy tape – can quickly pick up fur or hair from any surface, including your clothes. Be forewarned, however, that once the piece of tape becomes covered in hair, you will need to throw it away and get another piece of tape to continue the job.

### **Vacuum frequently.**

Invest in a pet-friendly vacuum with a HEPA filter then vacuum your floors on a regular basis.

If you have a dog who sheds frequently or you have more than one dog, you may have to vacuum more than once a day to ensure you are able to get rid of the dog hair.

### **Groom your dog regularly.**

A well-groomed dog will still shed and will still get hair on the furniture and around the house. But, if you groom your dog on a regular basis, you will notice you will have to get rid of less dog hair around your house.